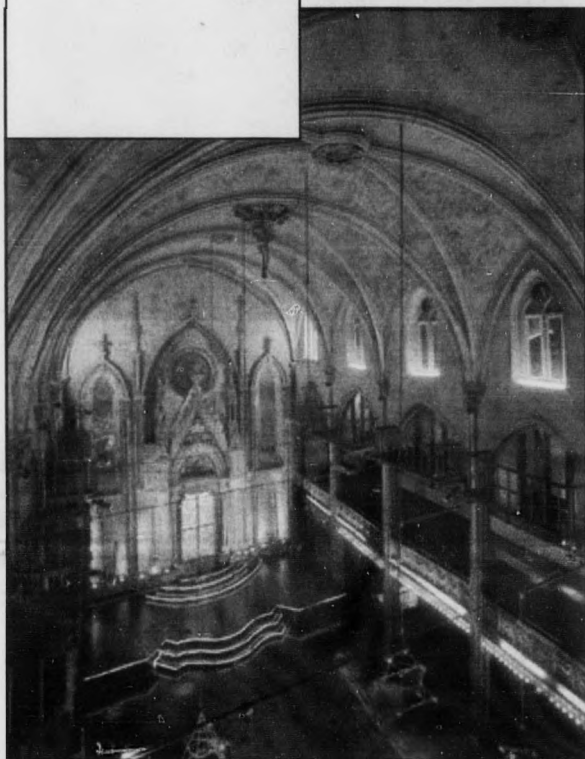


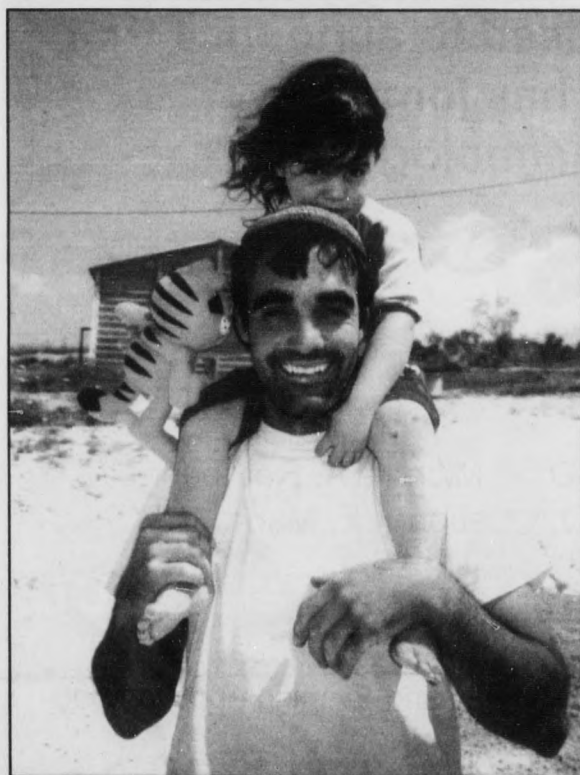
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GOTHIC IN GOTHAM—This neogothic synagogue on New York's Lower East Side has been meticulously preserved by the Angel Orensanz Foundation. *Shoshana Harper's photo feature begins on page NAT 12. Photo courtesy of Angel Orensanz Foundation.*



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Terrorism heats up as withdrawal nears

JERUSALEM—As the JPO went to press, it appeared that the shaky truce that had lessened Palestinian terror attacks was disintegrating, possibly wrecking Prime Minister Sharon's hopes for a peaceful pullout from some Gaza and West Bank areas in mid-August.

In a television appearance, Sharon said Israel would strike against terrorists, including those from Islamic Jihad.

"We will take all steps against Islamic Jihad without any limitations. The response to terror acts will be strong and harsh," he said. "There is no chance to reach a peace agreement as long as terror occurs."

"We will fight terror and carry out the disengagement. One isn't dependent on the other," Israeli cabinet minister Ehud Olmert said on Israel radio.

In recent months Israeli and Palestinian military officers had reached a series of understandings to coordinate the withdrawal. The United States supported those joint efforts. With the most recent belligerency, U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice this week was planning to return to the region to encourage coordination.

Lighting the fuse was an Islamic Jihad suicide bombing that murdered four outside a shopping mall in Netanya, Israel located and killed eight of the terrorists responsible for the bombing.

Israeli military chiefs had promised in recent months to ensure that the evacuation of 21 Jewish communities in Gaza and four in the northern West Bank was not accompanied by hostile fire. That expectation appears to have changed.

Israeli media quoted Yuval Steinitz, a legislator from Sharon's Likud Party, as saying the pullout would be impossible without launching a major offensive at terrorist strongholds.

Public support for Sharon's unilateral pullback took a pounding as Palestinian rockets began hitting Israeli towns. Calls by citizens resistant to their evacuation for civil disobedience increased as the rockets fell.

Israel massed troops near the areas of Palestinian violence but held back, waiting for the Palestinian Authority to control the terrorists.

Palestinian Authority Chairman Mahmoud Abbas declared a commitment to end the rocket attacks but said he did not know how long it would take to do so. Palestinian security forces tried to stop rocket launchers, sparking gun battles with the terrorists. He said it was important for his security forces to quell the rocket attacks so that there need be no military response by Israel. "If this happens, this will sabotage everything," Abbas declared.

The Israeli border town of Sderot came under rocket attack as it has in the past. In addition, terrorists fired mortar barrages at Jewish communities in Gaza and in the western Negev desert, the army said.

Israel hoped that pressure from the United States, Egypt, and others would curb the Palestinian urge to exploit the evacuation to attack Israeli citizens and soldiers.

The new violence was seen as an effort by Hamas and Islamic Jihad to paint the evacuation as their success in chasing off the Israelis.

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Mazel tov! Max Nelson



Max Nelson with his daughter and business partner Jennifer Williams.

See Indiana page 5 for story



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Diamant at Carmel Clay Library Oct. 27

Anita Diamant, author of *The Red Tent*, will be the featured guest at the first annual "The Guilded Leaf" book and author luncheon, Oct. 27, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., presented by the Guild of the Carmel Clay Public Library Foundation.

Joining Diamant will be Lori Borgman, author and syndicated columnist; Jeff Stone, author of *Tiger: The Five Ancestors Series #1*, and Terence Faherty, award-winning author of the Owen Keane and Scott Elliott mystery series.

The event will be moderated by Andy Murphy, author, literary agent, and co-founder of The WriteStuff Writer's Conference, a nationally recognized program of support for budding writers.

In support of the *Ambassadors for Children* mission to better the lives of children who live in impoverished areas around the world, each guest is asked to bring a new children's book to be donated to AFC.

Diamant is a Boston-based writer and lecturer. Her first work of fiction, *The Red Tent*, based on the biblical story of Dinah, won the 2001 Booksense Book of the Year Award. A national bestseller, *The Red Tent* has been published overseas in 20 languages.

Her second novel, *Good Harbor*, is a contemporary story



Anita Diamant

about two Jewish women who become friends over the course of a summer. Although very different from *The Red Tent*, *Good Harbor* also explores the importance of relationships

between women.

Diamant's non-fiction guides to contemporary Jewish life are standard reference books in homes across North America. Her newest book, *Pitching my Tent: on Marriage, Motherhood, Friendship and Other Leaps of Faith*, is a collection of personal essays. Her next book, *The Last Days of Dogtown*, will be released this fall.

The event will take place at the Ritz Charles in Carmel. The cost is \$54 (\$60 non-members). Call 814-3905 to reserve your place.

Event proceeds will benefit the literacy and reading programs of the Carmel Clay Public Library. For more information, visit the Foundation website at www.carmel.lib.in.us/foundation.

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Obituaries

Alexander Lazar, 88, served in World War II

Alexander "Alex" Lazar, 88, of Indianapolis, died July 15.

Mr. Lazar was a public accountant for 35 years. He was a veteran of World War II, serving in active duty for four years, and was a member of the Army Reserves for six years.

He was a holder of the Legion of Merit and a recipient of the Rome Arno Battlestar. He served as a member of General Eisenhower's staff in London, England, and later in North Africa Supreme Mediterranean Headquarters.

Mr. Lazar was a long-time

member of Congregation Shaarey Tefilla and of the American Legion.

He was predeceased by his wife of 44 years, Selma Polachek Lazar. Survivors include his daughter, Denise Paskie; his son, Ronald Lazar; 10 grandchildren, and a great-grandchild.

Graveside services were on July 18 in Ezras Achim Cemetery. Arrangements were entrusted to Aaron-Ruben-Nelson Mortuary.

Memorial contributions may be made to Congregation Shaarey Tefilla.

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Posting the Past

Compiled by MATTHEW J. SILVER



July 23, 1965: Mrs. Louis Fink, chairman of the annual meeting of the Jewish Welfare Federation at Broadmoor Country Club, is being pinned by a group of teenage leaders (l-r) Terry Newman, Lee Ann Fink, and Barbie Leventhal.

From past editions of *The Indiana Jewish Post & Opinion*.

On this day in Jewish History: The Disputation of Barcelona opened in 1263. (*The Jewish Book of Days*)

July 15, 1955

Mr. and Mrs. L.L. Goodman were hosts to over 100 Temple Teens at their home on Sunday, July 10. Among the prizewinners of relay races, an egg and spoon game, and a diving contest were Linda Prager, Nancy Fichman, Paddy Burnstein, Ronnie Popp, Richard Popp, David Lutz, David Shapiro, and Buddy Klapper.

Sara Sampson and Rene Fox were in charge of supper, and Jack Maurer was the grill chef. Bernie Celender and Steve Medias kept watch over the swimmers, and Sharon Maurer was in charge of water games.

July 19, 1995

New Dimensions, the JCC's singles group, has selected the old Jewish southside neighborhood for its social action clean-up project for this Sunday. The present day Concord Center serves the neighborhood today, just as it served the Jewish immigrants who came from many countries between the early 1800s and early 1900s and settled in the area.

There were Polish and Russian synagogues, a Sephardic synagogue, and even a shul for peddlers. There was a Hebrew school, home for the aged, a communal building for recreation, English language classes, recreation, and housing assistance. The neighborhood was filled with small businesses begun by some of the immigrants. The Jewish cemetery is the last remnant of the once thriving Jewish area.






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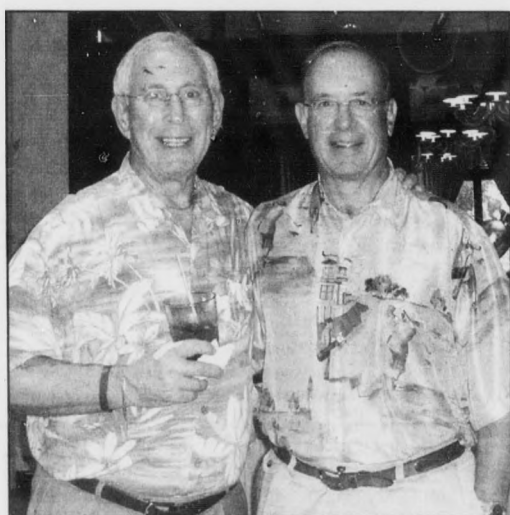
Dee and Leon Calderon.



Miles Nelson and Jennifer Williams presenting a commemorative plaque to Max Nelson.



Bill and Fay Levy.



David Epstein and Dr. Donald Rothbaum.



Rabbi Jon and Sandy Adland, June Herman, and Dorothy Newman.

On Wednesday, July 13, at Broadmoor Country Club, family and community celebrated Max Nelson's 50-year association with Aaron-Ruben-Nelson Mortuary. Over 150 people came together to congratulate him and to share in this special *simcha*.

In attendance were his family, including his wife, Donna, his daughters, Jennifer (Chris) Williams and Laurie (Michael) Wurster, and his son, Miles (Carolina) Nelson.

Four of his grandchildren were able to be there: Lindsay Williams, Noah Nelson, and Eli and Charlie Wurster. His eldest grandson, Ari Williams, is away at Camp Livingston. Wonderful classical music was provided by a trio headed by Vladimir Tzuckerman.



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Jewish Post & Opinion

This morning when I checked my e-mail, I read the following message titled "Seeking Peace in Morocco and Jerusalem" from Eliyahu McLean. Tears welled up in my eyes as I read the words. So much of the available reading on this subject is about blaming, getting even, and not making any attempt to understand the plight of the other person. What was heartwarming to me is that it conveys that there are people of many different faiths not only showing an interest in peace, but actively taking steps to achieve it.

When I forwarded the e-mail to Sue Swartz in Bloomington, Ind., whose trip to Israel earlier this year was reported in our center spread, this was her response: "Thanks! How I wish we were there....Our visit to Ibrahim El Hawa was one of the most amazing parts of our last trip. This gives me hope."

Jennie Cohen

Pursuing peace

By ELIYAHU MCLEAN



The following is a short update of our path of seeking peace in Morocco and in the Holy Land.

Peace delegation at the Boombamela Festival, April 26

Every year 30,000 young Israelis come during Passover to the Boombamela Festival which

takes place at Nitzanim beach near Ashkelon. For the first time we brought a delegation of 45 people, young Israeli Arab youth as well Christian and Muslim leaders from the Galilee and north, to be part of this event. Hassan Amer brought the youth from Kafr Qassem.

As we arrived at the festival to the central cabaret stage, two Muslims from our group were invited up to speak in front of hundreds. When they spoke about how their being here shows that we can indeed live together, there was huge applause. Around the main fire at sunset it was inspiring to see religious Jewish Israelis, Muslim women, Native Americans, and Hindu Babas from India dancing together in an ecstatic circle while the youth sang in Arabic.

Peace walk in the Old City with Middle Way, April 29-30

The Middle Way organizes regular silent Arab-Jewish peace walks. After walking through the Old City on Friday, we set up camp in an olive grove at the foot of the Mount of Olives. At our camp on Friday night I led the Shabbat prayers and the blessing over grape juice in Hebrew and translated the prayers to Arabic for the Palestinian teenagers who joined us.

On Saturday, the seventh day of Passover, I led the Middle Way group on a silent peace walk from the Mount of Olives into the Old City through Lions Gate. We arrived at the Ecce Homo Sisters of Zion monastery on the Via Dolorosa where Sister Trudy welcomed us and shared a Christian vision of peace. Sheikh Abdul Aziz Bukhari also came and shared the Muslim view.

From Ecce Homo we then walked to the Jewish quarter where we were welcomed by Rabbi Yaakov Fogelman at his home. Most of the group of liberal Israeli Jews and Arabs were amazed, as they had never been in the home of an Orthodox rabbi in the Old City.

Peace gathering in Jericho, May 8

A peace group from Holland hosted us at a peace gathering in Jericho. We brought a delegation to Jericho of over 60 Israeli Jews and Arabs, including many youth from Kfar Qassem, for a day of dialogue, music, and prayer.

The deputy mayor of Jericho visited us and said, "I regard this as a step forward to building a relationship with all of humanity." We closed the day with a prayer circle for peace, holding hands around a huge stone Islamic star at the Hisham Palace Umayyad period archeological site.

Gathering at my Jerusalem home, May 25

Israelis, including some settlers and Palestinians from the West Bank, gathered in my home for an evening of music and dialogue. Joining us were a peace pilgrimage group from Texas, Sister Martha Ann Kirk, and Christopher and Covita Moroney, who shared stories of ancient Jewish, Christian, and Muslim women. Many



Jacques Chancel leads a panel discussion at the Fes Colloquium.

who came expressed the importance of these people-to-people meetings.

Festival of Sacred Music in Fes, Morocco, May 5-11

Sufi Sheikh Abdul Aziz Bukhari and I were invited to take part in the "Fes Encounters" that were a part of the World Festival of Sacred Music. At the festival we were treated to music such as Ravi Shankar, a joint concert of Qawwali and Flamenco singers, and music from Egypt and Central Asia.

Each night from 11 p.m. was the "Sufi Night" at Dar Tazi in the Old City of Fes. Throughout Fes the people embraced me as a Jew after they saw how I openly danced with the Sufis. The most interesting Sufi night was when the women Sufi singers performed.

At the Fes Colloquium over 300 policymakers, activists, and academics from all over the world gathered to discuss the theme of "Giving



Fouzi Skali (left) with Eliyahu McLean and Sheikh Abdul Aziz Bukhari.

Soul to Globalization." Fouzi Skali introduced Sheikh Abdul Aziz Bukhari and me on the last of the five days of meetings which took place at the scenic Batha Museum.

On our panel was Rajmohan Gandhi, grandson of Gandhi and Leila Shahid, PLO representative to France. When we held hands as a Jew and Muslim from Jerusalem, the response was tremendous.

Sheikh Aziz and I closed the event by getting everyone to stand up and form a circle as we led a chant of "Shalom, Salaam, Hu, Hu." BBC, Radio France, and Moroccan television interviewed us. I then spent the Shavuot Jewish holiday with the Jewish community at the Chabad House of Casablanca.

Jerusalem Gathering of Light, June 17-18

Back in Jerusalem we held the annual Jerusalem Gathering of Light in the Jerusalem forest. After leading the Friday night Shabbat prayers, I introduced a group of eight Palestinians from Jenin, Ramallah, and Jericho who were brought there by Souliman Khatib from the Abu Sukkar L'Salaam Palestinian peace center.

On Saturday afternoon the women from Jenin and a couple from Jericho spoke about the need for an end to all the violence and the hope for a shared future with the Israelis. Everyone there was touched by their sincerity and expressions of hope for peace.

Mr. McLean invites readers to visit www.sulha.com.

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Bush urged to name moderate to high court

WASHINGTON—Sen. Arlen Specter, R-Pa., says he would like President Bush's nominee to replace U.S. Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor to be somebody who would follow in her footsteps as a swing voter on the court.

Specter said on the "Fox News Sunday" TV show he would like Bush to pick somebody with experience outside the judiciary.

"When you look back at the court that handed down

Brown v. Board of Education unanimously, there was an ex-governor, there were three ex-senators, two attorneys general, a solicitor general, a professor, and somebody from the SEC," Specter said.

He hoped aloud that Bush would resist pressure from conservative groups and instead name a moderate.

He said, "It's helpful to the country to have somebody who is a swing vote, which maintains the balance."

New York Democratic Sen. Charles Schumer, also a member of the Judiciary Committee, suggested that Bush ask key senators from both parties about some of the candidates he's considering.

He said on CBS's "Face the Nation" that it was certain Bush would nominate a conservative, but Schumer made it plain he would prefer an "O'Connor-type conservative — thoughtful, willing to see the other side, pragmatic."

Israel defense chief delays Washington visit

JERUSALEM—Israeli Defense Minister Shaul Mofaz postponed a visit to Washington intended to reach agreement on future Israeli arms sales to other countries.

Officials said Mofaz changed his schedule because of a surge in violence in the region.

The recent violence has included Gaza Strip actions and a suicide attack in Netanya that killed five Israelis.

Mofaz and U.S. officials have been working on a

memorandum of understanding intended to govern Israeli arms deals in the wake of tensions over Israel's planned sale to China of spare parts for the Harpy armed drone aircraft.

The Bush administration has objected that such a sale would upgrade China's anti-radar aircraft.

China complained about Washington's objections as outside interference in its relations with Israel after reports that Israel was calling off the arms deal.

French promise stand against Jew-haters

PARIS—France will fight tirelessly against antisemitism and hate crimes, Prime Minister Dominique de Villepin said Sunday at an event marking the 63rd anniversary of a World War II roundup of French Jews.

"With willpower and justice we will win this fight," Villepin said. He spoke at the former site of the Velodrome d'Hiver

bicycle stadium, which was used as a transit camp on July 16 and 17, 1942.

Records show 13,152 Jews were rounded up in the Paris region, and 8,160 — mostly children — were held at the stadium for transport to Auschwitz. About 75,000 Jews were deported from France — where many had sought safety from the Nazis — to Nazi concen-

tration camps. About 2,500 survived.

Racist and antisemitic violence in France nearly doubled last year and is continuing, according to a human rights commission report.

Many attacks against the Jewish community, including arson and vandalism, have been blamed on young Muslims.

Richard Jones likely next envoy to Israel

WASHINGTON—Richard H. Jones is likely to be the next U.S. ambassador to Israel, according to a report by the Israeli embassy.

If appointed, Jones would replace Ambassador Dan Kurtzer, who is completing his four-year tenure in the post.

Jones has previously served as the U.S. ambassador to Lebanon and Kuwait and several months ago was appointed as Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice's advisor on Iraq. He has never served in Israel but is considered an expert in Middle East affairs.

Israel welcomes 500 North American Jewish immigrants

JERUSALEM—New violence in Israel did not deter more than 500 North American Jewish immigrants who arrived last week on Wednesday on chartered flights from New York and Toronto — the most to immigrate in a single day, according to some media.

They came as part of a joint initiative of *aliyah* assistance program Nefesh B'Nefesh and the Jewish Agency. They were the first of about 3,200 North American Jews scheduled to arrive in Israel this summer.

They deplaned to cheers from friends, relatives, and Israel Defense Forces troops waving flags.

Welcomers included Prime Minister Sharon, Vice Prime Minister Shimon Peres, Foreign Minister Silvan Shalom, and Jewish Agency Chairman Zeev Bielski.

"*Aliyah* is the primary goal of our government, the future of our great people," Sharon said. "Life in Israel is not always easy, but I promise you we'll do all we can to assist you on your journey home."

"We need you more than ever. Come to Israel. We need you here," Sharon said. "Welcome home — to the Holy

Land."

By the end of the year the number of North American

immigrants assisted by Nefesh B'Nefesh since its establishment in 2001 is projected

to rise sixfold, according to Danny Oberman of Nefesh B'Nefesh.

He said the six planes this summer will be followed by 10 next year.



TRAUMA TOUR—During a recent trip to Israel, members of the Board of Directors for the Republican Jewish Committee visited the Hadassah University Medical Center. During the tour, Director General Prof. Shlomo Mor-Yosef and Senior Trauma Surgeon Dr. Alon Pikarsky provided an in-depth look at how the facility functions. In addition, the delegation learned how the center prepares for both conventional and non-conventional attacks, specifically the measures taken to deal with mass casualties.

Pictured are (from left): Dr. Munir Kazmir, of Leonia, N.J.; RJC Executive Director Matthew Brooks, of Washington, D.C.; Marc Goldman, of Orlando, Fla.; Dr. Jeffrey Feingold, of Delray Beach, Fla.; Senior Trauma Surgeon Dr. Alon Pikarsky (rear); Walter Stern, of New York City; Hadassah Director General Prof. Shlomo Mor-Yosef; Hadassah National President June Walker; Fred Sands, of Beverly Hills; RJC Deputy Executive Director William Daroff (rear); Mark Lezell, RJC Congressional Affairs Director Joel Kassiday (rear), and Michael David Epstein, all of Washington, D.C., and Larry Leeds, of New York City.

Obituaries

Raymond Ehrlich, 87; state high court justice

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Raymond Ehrlich, a trial lawyer who later served on the Florida Supreme Court, has died at the age of 87.

Mr. Ehrlich served as chief justice from 1988 to 1990; he retired

in January 1991.

He was successful as a lawyer in defending insurance companies against accident claims. As a judge, though, he was instrumental in moving the court toward favoring accident victims.

Harry Potter charms Israeli readers, too

HERZLIYA, Israel—Israeli youngsters and their parents were lined up to buy the latest Harry Potter book at 2 a.m. Saturday, even though it was the Sabbath and even though the Hebrew translation was still to come.

Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince was setting sales records for a new book worldwide, Israel included. Israeli

Gili Bar Hillel will translate the book into Hebrew. She expects the Hebrew version to be out by December.

To add to the craze, a conference of scholars in Reading, England, included some discussion about the question "Is Harry Potter Jewish?"

Bar Hillel says she doesn't think anyone is literally claiming Harry is Jewish. One schol-

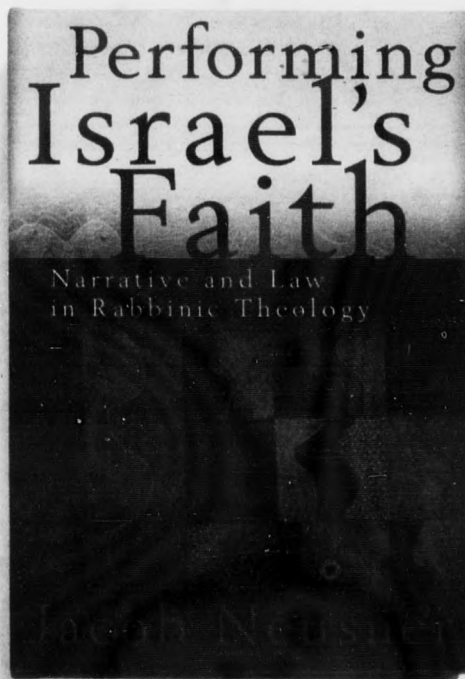
ar credited the wizard with a *yiddishe neshama*, a Jewish soul, because he cares about how others are feeling, he is kind, and he defends his beliefs.

Another scholar has drawn comparisons between the growth of the Harry Potter character and Kabbala.



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...on the path of faith and understanding

'Her Stories, My Hands' featured at Dallas festival

Sculptor Bobby Pearl, whose work "Her Stories, My Hands" was featured recently in the JPO, is the subject of a new short film by Ion Mot. The movie features 10 sculptures inspired by her grandmother's life.

The film has been selected as part of the 18th Annual Dallas Video Festival, to take place Aug. 3-7 at the Dallas Museum of Art and the Dallas Theater Center. It was selected from a "large field of entries," noted Bart Weiss, artistic director for the festival.

Long-awaited humor flick wins Berlin film plaudits

BERLIN—A lighthearted movie that looks at contemporary Jewish life in Germany has swept the German Film Awards over the weekend.

Swiss director Dani Levy's "Alles auf Zucker!" ("Go for Zucker!") was nominated in 10 of 15 categories. The film puts a slapstick touch to the efforts of a secular, and near-bankrupt, German Jew trying to manage after his mother's death.

The film won the Lola, which is Germany's equivalent to the Oscar, for best picture, best actor for Henry Huebchen, and best director for Levy.

Film critics and Jewish leaders praised the work for looking at everyday Jewish life instead of the more usual Holocaust themes of movies about Jews.

Spirituality Corner

Two rabbis and a tallit bag?

By RABBI STEVEN M. LEAPMAN

I've been raised all my days amongst sages and their families.



Still, I've found nothing better for one's well-being than: silence. —Rabbi Shimon ben Gamaliel (Pirke Avot 1.17)

Do not look at the flask but at what it contains; a new flask may be full of old wine, and an old flask may have no wine. —Rabbi Judah Ha'Nasi (Pirke Avot 4.27)

As a People of The Book, we Jews are a society of speech. Our culture of conversation ascribes merit to those who dazzlingly deploy words; she who is agile at argument wins acclaim. Our God wants us to tussle with texts, invoke debate, and invite discussion.

While Judaism taught the world to love literacy, don't get self-satisfied this summer, for our sages assign us to study Pirke Avot, a penultimate vacation reading list of ethical maxims and mandates to prepare us for the approaching Holy Days.

Get in the spirit! Be bothered by Rabbi Shimon's insights. Are we woefully wordy? As our mystics interpret Genesis, God knew when to keep still, shushing the Divine Self by partially withdrawing from the universe, just enough to allow a tiny portion of space where Creation could take shape. If God could let go and, merely by restraining speech, stop controlling every aspect of how the universe evolved, what of us?

As a contemporary attempt at sacrifice, can we constrain commentary? Is chatter an affront, not only to those who endure it but to One Who Awaits Our Silence? How might our flow of words violate others' privacy, for simply by sealing our lips we allow others their humanity! Shall we prayerfully blend insight with silence and abstain from "talk," leaving less choppy the already flooded torrent of social discourse?

As we allow our inner

unspoken lives to coalesce beneath the radar of speech, we gain a serenity that blesses others who, like ourselves, are eager to craft their own minute domain of space to cultivate convictions or make peace with life's all-too-compelling compromises.

Have you noticed how regularly noisiness accompanies a brand of nonsense our grandparents labeled *narishkeit*? Rabbi Shimon would concur. Rabbi Judah was also a learned man of words who edited our Mishnah yet instructed his descendants, "Don't judge a book by its cover!" What goes unknown on first assessment may in the end prompt us to glory and awe.

Read Rabbi Shimon further and note a preference for action over talk: ultimately, not study, but practice is essential. Finally, an abundance of talk brings on sin. Silence sows integrity. Our actions are possibly our finest speeches. Yet for Rabbi Judah, it is erroneous to infer from what we see others do or what we don't see them do.

All people are created in The Holy Image. Shimon and Judah underscore how we are so much more than our words, so much grander than our performance on the stage of calling, or how we promenade in the parade of career. Something hidden, wondrously mysterious, empowers each man, every woman, and surely all children. Only gossip mongers cannot abide such boundaries and lose the blessing given those who deeply respect what makes human life holy.

This is why I love *tallit* bags. Yes, *tallit* bags! I see these diversely decorated pouches as "personal and private sanctity sacks." They are soft yet shield a shawl which we bless, then wear to recall all we owe God and all God owes us. Who proposed the covenant in the first place? Wearing your *tallit*, you tell God you are front and center to uphold a bargain sealed since Sinai. Those tassels prod and nudge God to get and stay involved in our lives. Is this bond seasoned with *chutzpah* and love? Short answer: yes. A *tallit* announces a public partnership to pattern our world

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Images of the Galilee

T'munot HaGalil

I've been taking photographs since I got an old Kodak Brownie at the age of five. My early passion



for the magical alchemy of light

transmuted into art has given me a lifelong habit of not just looking at the world, but really seeing it.

In 1979, I lived in Jerusalem for a year. Times were quieter then, and I had easy access to every inch of Ha-Aretz (which still included the entire Sinai). I played rock-and-roll music in a Jerusalem club called Gitara Shloshim v'Echad, traveled widely, and took more photographs than could be counted.

It was nearly 25 years before I returned to Israel, spending 17

weeks there over the course of eight trips in a year. My family occupied a townhouse in Kfar Vradim, a Western Galilee village that opened its arms and made us part of their small community.

I have never felt so at home as I did in Kfar Vradim, and rarely have I been so compelled to capture images as I was of the coarse and fiery energy that radiates from every inch of this land and this people.

It is my privilege to share the results with you. —SAS

Even Echad Omed L'va-ad (One Stone Stands Alone)

By STEPHEN SCHUSTER

A delicate, frictional conspiracy of wind, water, and lifetimes eventually frets away the gossamer frailty of weaker stone. Facet by tortuous facet, reticent gems of mystical stubbornness ripen from limestone sanctuaries, coyly divulged by perpetual tattletales of stormy desedimentation. Diamond perfection dignified by the noblest setting could only shy away from the sublime artistry of this flinty Galilean blossom, tenaciously riveted to the bleached, chalky cliffs of Israel's Rosh Hanikra.

The triple-layered chalk and dolomite composition of the Rosh Hanikra landscape is geo-morphologically isolated, and its uniqueness is obvious even to the untrained eye. Rosh Hanikra has historically served as a geopolitical linchpin, a point of passage for trading caravans and armies between the northern societies of Lebanon and Syria and the southern cultures of Israel, Egypt, and Africa.

The cliffs there once featured a narrow ascent of steps, the summit of which was the Southern entrance to the Plain of Phoenicia and the city of Tyre. Biblically the junction was known by the functionally descriptive name *Sulam Datzur*, or "Ladder of Tyre." The Book of Maccabees I records that Antiochus VI Epiphanes Dionysius named Simon Maccabeus military governor of coastal territory "from the Ladder of Tyre to the borders of Egypt."

Around 323 B.C.E., Alexander of Macedonea chiseled the first tunnel at Rosh Hanikra to create a passageway for his army after besieging Tyre. Armies of the Seleucids and the

Ptolemies made use of the passageway in the third and second century B.C.E., as did the Crusaders in 1099 C.E. Fleeing the Nazis in the 1940s, members of the Ha'apala (illegal immigration during the British Mandate) slipped through the Rosh Hanikra tunnel to enter Eretz Yisrael.

Tens of meters beneath the sea-facing stone chip in this photograph, erosive subterfuge has sculpted cavernous grottoes inside Rosh Hanikra — enchantingly ethereal chambers moist with incandescent sunblush and sibilant seasurge. Above and below the surface at Rosh Hanikra, nature's elemen-

tal virility is tangibly flaunted. But the determined fortitude of one tiny stone stands here as a towering monument against those who would prefer us to submissively crumble away into the sea.

Stephen Schuster is vice president of Temple Sinai in Worcester, Mass., where he lives with his wife, Julie, and their four children. A published writer, photographer, and recording artist, Steve is CEO and founder of Rainier, one of the leading marketing consultancies for high-technology companies. An avid songwriter, hiker, gardener, and yoga practitioner, Steve has made nine trips to Israel. He welcomes comments at steve@rainierco.com.



Even Echad Omed L'va-ad

Media Watch

Jewish moral voices on 'Naked City'

By RABBI ELLIOT B. GERTEL

Occasionally in this column I offer reviews of classic TV se-



ries, sometimes drawing upon oral histories I have done with writers and producers. I begin three columns on "Naked City" (1958-1963), exploring "Jewish Moral Voices" in that vintage series.

From 1958 to 1963 millions of Americans looked forward to the "Naked City" television series, the familiar sign-off refrain of which became a byword of pop culture: "There are eight million stories in the Naked City [New York]. This has been one of them."

The show was largely the work of its reflective and resolute producer Herbert B. Leonard, who told me, "We never treated it like it was television. It was always little movies for us."

Early on in the "Naked City" programs, Judaic motifs were utilized with remarkable specificity. Of particular note is the way that older Jews were used as a chorus of morality. Through a critical review of the wording and references in these episodes, and oral histories with the writers themselves, we can trace within these gems of television history a preoccupation with, and even reverence for, Jewish moral teachings.

"Show Me the Way to Go Home" (Nov. 15, 1961) told the story of Marie Mariani, played by Lois Nettleton. Marie is off to meet an unworthy boyfriend who has ignored her at every turn. She is not aware that she is being stalked by a rather unstable young man, Danny Kealing (Burt Brinckerhoff).

Surprisingly, Marie's salvation comes in the form of an unnamed elderly Jewish woman who distracts her on the street. The woman is upset and needy. She requires help just to find her way. She complains incessantly.

We learn immediately that she has lost her economic independence, as she was just

fired from her child care job. She refers to her son-in-law as a *hamor*, a donkey. Interestingly, the Yiddish (and Hebrew) word is used but not translated here. The woman says she doesn't know where her daughter lives because she doesn't want to go where she is not wanted.

The elderly woman's remarks are largely paraphrases of old Yiddish sayings: "An old woman shouldn't be born," "My fault it takes me so long to die?" "There's no such thing as a bad mother or a good get [bill of divorcement]." The latter

who had become a copywriter at one of them. She suggested that he use his G.I. Bill to take writing courses.

During the early '50s, Rabbi Moses Feldman of Los Angeles suggested that Wincelberg write about the Jewish Hollywood scene for *The National Jewish Post & Opinion*, in Indianapolis, thus giving him entre to various producers and actors.

Through an accountant at *The Post*, Herbert Luft, who was also an associate producer, Wincelberg got his first writing

During the early '50s, Rabbi Moses Feldman of Los Angeles suggested that Wincelberg write about the Jewish Hollywood scene for *The National Jewish Post & Opinion*, in Indianapolis, thus giving him entre to various producers and actors.

term, also, is not translated.

The woman even paraphrases in English the words of the Yom Kippur liturgy, "Don't throw me away in my old age," and at one point she asks the young woman, "What are you *shlepping* me around for?" (It may have been the first time that the Yiddish term *shlepping*, "dragging," was used on television.) It is particularly ironic, of course, because the older woman has been taking up the younger one's time.

The unusually rich Jewish vocabulary of this episode prompted me to seek out the writers, Shimon and Anita Wincelberg, for an interview.²

Shimon was born in Kiel, Germany. His parents were German citizens of Galician Orthodox Jewish background who, under Hitler, fled first to Berlin and then, in 1938, when Shimon was 14, to the East Bronx. After graduating from high school, Shimon worked as a diamond polisher and farm laborer and served in the U.S. Army from 1941 to 1943.

While in the service he wrote short stories and satirical articles and decided, afterward, to pursue a writing career in California, perhaps in advertising. He applied to different agencies and received a call from a former high school teacher

jobs in film with Bill Callahan, Jr. He did the screenplays for "Mare For Peace" (a film under Protestant church auspices) and "Fighter Attack." The latter film led to a contract with Twentieth Century Fox Studios.

Wincelberg became a legend at Fox Studios and in the film industry for standing up for Jewish religious observance. Shortly after he began to work at Fox, he was telephoned by Darryl Zanuck's secretary, who said, "Mr. Zanuck will see you tonight at 10 p.m."

It was Friday, and Wincelberg responded that he could not make it on Friday night.

The secretary said, "You don't understand. Mr. Zanuck will see you tonight at 10 p.m."

Wincelberg explained that it was the Jewish Sabbath and that he could not possibly come, but that he would gladly come any other time, day or night. She hung up with an ominous "I'll get back to you."

The writer in the next office told Wincelberg that he might as well pack up and leave, as "nobody says no to Zanuck."

Wincelberg had actually started to clear out his desk when the phone rang. It was Zanuck's secretary. He recalls a giggle in her voice in contrast

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Jewish Theater

'Primo' is Sher brilliance

By IRENE BACKALENICK

How do you speak of the unspeakable, understand the



unknowable? How do you take on the Holocaust without fear of trivializing it or falling far short of the mark? If we can come to any understanding, it must be through a single person's experience. Astronomical numbers deal with the abstract, while the particular strikes with devastating impact.

And now Sir Antony Sher, a Jew born in South Africa and arguably England's greatest actor of our time, takes on Primo Levi's intensely personal story – thus enlightening us all. His one-man show, now on Broadway, is the production of the National Theatre of Great Britain.

Sher, under the direction of Richard Wilson, uses Levi's postwar memo *If This Is a Man* to bring the story to life, excerpting the material from Levi's book, written two years after his liberation.

Levi, an Italian Jew who was shipped to Auschwitz in 1944, gives a day-by-day, moment-by-moment, account of his life in the camps. It is written in an objective, matter-of-fact style, allowing the facts to speak for themselves as Levi moves from

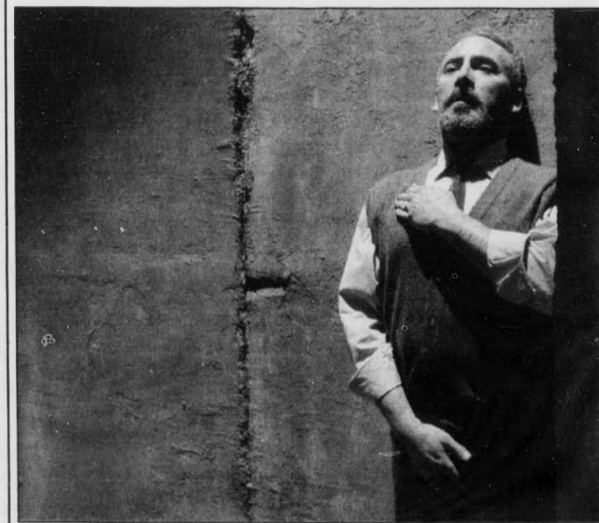
innocence to a kind of understanding. Survival is the driving instinct, and a bit of bread, rags, or scrap papers can make the difference.

Levi manages to survive the camp's horrors of starvation, thirst, deprivation, dehumanization, and random killings by virtue of unexpected friendships and his own profession, that of a chemist. He is chosen, at one point, as a "specialized worker," thus saved from the dreaded "selexia" and other refined horrors of the camp. (Selexia, he explains, is the systematic selection and murdering of the prisoners to make room for new batches.)

Sir Antony creates a memorable Primo Levi, a middle-aged academic type looking back on his Auschwitz experience. Wearing glasses, cardigan, and beard, he quietly moves back in time – and in the process takes on the camp shuffle or shivers naked in the cold. Every emotion, or lack of emotion, plays across his face, body, voice. This brilliant performance is Levi reliving the experience and taking us all with him.

If there is any criticism to be made, it is to question Sir Antony's cultured British accent, hardly appropriate to his character. Should Sher have proceeded with an Italian accent? Or would that have been a clownish touch?

Whether or not we want to move back to that time of horror, Sir Antony Sher and Primo Levi indeed take us on a memorable journey. It is a consummate performance.



Sir Antony Sher as Primo Levi

Focus II

Lessons in empathy

By RABBI SHEA HECHT

Shortly after my marriage, my in-laws sent us to visit



with one of their friends for a Sunday barbeque. When we got to their home, we saw men hauling away the last remnants of an old tree. The couple was standing in front of their home with tears in their eyes as they watched the last of pieces of the tree dragged off their property.

I was 22 years old and, having spent much of my life within the four walls of educational institutions, I was just becoming aware of the scope of global pain – wars, disease, death, etc. This knowledge made it hard for me deal with grown-ups crying over a tree, but regardless of my personal feelings, this friendship was important to my in-laws, and I also didn't want to appear callous.

The problem was, how could I sound empathetic over a lost tree if I never lost a tree nor did I feel the magnitude of the loss of the tree relative to the many other problems in this world?

I then realized that all I had to do was listen. The couple told me that the tree was there when they moved into the house 25 years previously. Their children climbed this tree, they built tree houses on it, they swung on it, and sat and talked under this tree. The tree represented a great part of their life together, and it was very much a part of their home and their history. Just listening to them express their loss, I was able to understand it from their perspective and express empathy.

One afternoon I was walking through the streets of Manhattan with my brother Rabbi Shimon, on the way to an appointment. While I waited at a corner for a red light to change to green, a familiar-looking man waiting with me for the light turned around and said, "Hi!"

I asked him how he was

doing. He answered, "I lost my mother seven months ago." I took a moment and then expressed my sympathy and my good wishes.

The light changed, and we continued to walk. My brother asked me, "Who was that?" I said, "I don't know." He said, "But you sounded like you really felt for his loss, and he seemed comforted by your words."

I told my brother that I didn't have to know who the man was to feel for his loss. I later realized who he was, but that didn't make a difference in my empathy. I learned that to show empathy for someone's loss, I could draw on a loss in my own life.

The parents of a mentally disabled child sat in my office and spoke to me. The challenge of dealing with this child had affected the mother's belief in G-d, and the couple was seeking to help the woman strengthen her belief in religion. Since I never went through this specific test in life, I was somewhat at a loss as to what to tell them.

I wanted to give them empathy, but I couldn't. I therefore gave what I could: sympathy and some advice. I got them in touch with a support group of parents with the same challenges so they could get the empathy they needed. I advised them to deal with the physical problem of how to care for the child before dealing with the religious aspect. I connected them with programs directed to their child's disability. Before they left my office, I once again expressed my sympathy.

After the physical and moral support was set up and they had a better handle on their personal difficulties, the couple came back to my office, and we revisited the issue from a spiritual perspective.

They found that the spiritual complemented and uplifted the physical. Even though I never "walked a mile in their shoes," they felt my sympathy, and perhaps even empathy, from my tone of voice and actions. I realized that not always can one put oneself in another's shoes. Sometimes all you can do is express sympathy and give advice.

While thinking these three stories through, I realized that they don't just teach clergy a

Opinion

Weak Brits, tough French

By DANIEL PIPES

Thanks to the war in Iraq, much of the world sees the



British government as resolute and tough, the French one as appeasing and weak. But in another war, the one against terrorism and radical Islam, the reverse is true: France is the most stalwart nation in the West, even more so than the United States, while Great Britain is the very most hapless.

Consider:

Counterterrorism

U.K.-based terrorists have carried out operations in

lesson, but everyone else, too. Our lives today bring us in contact with a broad spectrum of people – family, friends, neighbors, and co-workers – many of whom go through difficult times. What a challenge it is for us to show proper empathy.

Empathy should not be intrusive; a listening ear should be offered, but not forced on anyone. Some people have a support system. Some people would rather talk to a stranger, and some would rather not talk at all.

Empathy can be broken down into three parts. We have to listen whole-heartedly, then identify with the feeling of the person we're talking to – even if it's a different magnitude or the issue is on a different level. You don't have to fly on an airplane to understand turbulence; riding a roller coaster or a jumpy elevator can help you understand the feeling.

When we can't identify with someone else's feeling, we should express sympathy and give practical advice. Ultimately, whether its sympathy or empathy, expressing an honest feeling is the most important thing.

Rabbi Hecht is chairman of the board of the National Committee for the Furtherance of Jewish Education. He welcomes comments at 718-735-0223 or rabbishea@aol.com.

Pakistan, Afghanistan, Kenya, Tanzania, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Israel, Morocco, Russia, Spain, and the United States. Many governments – Jordanian, Egyptian, Moroccan, Spanish, French, and American – have protested London's refusal to shut down its Islamist terrorist infrastructure or extradite wanted operatives. In frustration, Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak publicly denounced Britain for "protecting killers." One American security group has called for Britain to be listed as a terrorism-sponsoring state.

Counterterrorism specialists disdain the British. Roger Cressey calls London "easily the most important jihadist hub in Western Europe." Steven Simon dismisses the British capital as "the Star Wars bar scene" of Islamic radicals. More brutally, an intelligence official said of last week's attacks: "The terrorists have come home. It is payback time for...an irresponsible policy."

While London hosts terrorists, Paris hosts a top-secret counterterrorism center, code-named Alliance Base, whose existence was just revealed by the *Washington Post*, where six major Western governments since 2002 share intelligence and run counterterrorism operations. (The latter makes it unique.)

More broadly, President Jacques Chirac instructed French intelligence agencies just days after 9/11 to share terrorism data with their U.S. counterparts "as if they were your own service." This cooperation is working: former acting CIA director John E. McLaughlin calls this bilateral intelligence tie "one of the best in the world." The British may have a "special relationship" with Washington in Iraq, but the French have one in the war on terror.

France accords terrorist suspects fewer rights than any other Western state, permitting interrogation without a lawyer, lengthy pre-trial incarcerations, and evidence acquired under dubious circumstances. Were he a terrorism suspect, says Evan Kohlmann, author of *Al-Qaida's Jihad in Europe*, he "would least like to be held under" the French system.

Radical Islam

The myriad French-British

differences in this arena can be summarized by the example of what Muslim girls may wear to state-funded schools.

Denbigh High School in Luton, 30 miles northwest from London, has a student population about 80 percent Muslim. It years ago accommodated the sartorial needs of their faith and heritage, including a female student uniform made up of the Pakistani *shalwar kameez* trousers, a jerkin top, and *hijab* head covering.

But when Shabina Begum, a teenager of Bangladeshi origins, insisted in 2004 on wearing a *jilbab*, which covers the entire body except for the face and hands, Denbigh administrators said no.

Their dispute ended up in litigation, and the Court of Appeal ultimately decided in Begum's favor. As a result, by law U.K. schools must now accept the *jilbab*.

Not only that, but Cherie Booth, wife of British prime minister Tony Blair, was Begum's lawyer at the appellate level. Booth called the court's judgment "a victory for all Muslims who wish to preserve their identity and values despite prejudice and bigotry."

In contrast, also in 2004, the French government outlawed the *hijab*, the Muslim headscarf, from public educational institutions, disregarding ferocious opposition both within France and among Islamists worldwide. In Tehran, protesters shouted "Death to France!" and "Death to Chirac the Zionist!"

The Palestinian Authority mufti, Ikrima Sa'id Sabri, declared that "French laws banning the *hijab* constitute a war against Islam as a religion." The Saudi grand mufti, Abdul Aziz al-Sheikh, called them a human rights infringement. When the "Islamic Army in Iraq" kidnapped two French journalists, it threatened their execution unless the *hijab* ban was revoked. Nonetheless Paris stood firm.

What lies behind these contrary responses? The British have seemingly lost interest in their heritage, while the French hold on to theirs; even as the British ban fox hunting, the French ban *hijabs*. The former embrace multiculturalism, the latter retain a pride in their

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The heroes and heroines of Gush Katif and N. Shomron

Part II of a report on the May-June, 2005, AFSI/ZOA Chizuk Mission to Israel

By HELEN FREEDMAN



Nadia Matar and child with Helen Freedman at Kfar Yam in Gush Katif.

Our AFSI/ZOA Chizuk Solidarity Mission took off from Newark Airport on Sunday, May 30, with 45 participants and a bag of orange shirts reading "Gush Katif Forever" on the front, with a map of all of Israel reading "Let My People Stay" on the back. In addition, we carried 500 Garfield orange cats to be distributed to the children of Gush Katif, Sanur, Homesh, and Hebron.

When asked why we chose Garfield as the toy of choice, the answer was that Garfield is orange, and he doesn't move – just like the residents of the threatened communities who will not move from their homes.

I'm ashamed to say that we didn't wear our orange shirts through Israeli passport control because we were afraid of being turned back, or detained at length, as I experienced on a previous trip. The shirts were distributed in the airport, once we were safely in the country. Even then I expected some Israeli authority to

swoop down and haul us off as criminals for wearing the offending color. Fortunately that didn't happen, and we were the Orange Brigade wherever we went.

In my previous article, Part I, I described the agony of the situation in Israel today, which we witnessed in so many ways in so many places. However, the good news is that there is also the ecstasy of the spiritually uplifting heroes and heroines of Israel who number in the hundreds of thousands. I will name just those with whom we met and from whom we received so much strength and resolve to continue to do everything in our power to ban the expulsion plan.

Izzy Danziger, our guide for the trip, is a blessing to those who benefit from the work he does for Mishmeret Yesha, the rapid response teams made up of residents of the communities of YESHA. One of his men who trains the rapid response teams, Sharon, was a former major in the IDF anti-terror unit. He explained that fighting terrorist infiltrators is the most complicated war situation for the least trained people, who only get nine days of training

each year.

Dror Vanunu, PR spokesman for Gush Katif, met us at Yad Mordechai to escort us into Gush Katif. Dror regularly comes to America and works tirelessly in Israel to educate people about the situation in GK. In a great statement of support for his position, he just completed building a

new house into which he and his family have moved. They plan to stay there.

Anita Tucker, the remarkable spokeswoman for Netzer Hazani, greeted everyone with a smile and treated us to delicious vegetables from her hot houses. She had told the children in the community that Garfield was coming, and we had a heart-warming experience distributing the toy cats to the eagerly waiting children.

Effie Eitam's wife and son rode up on their bicycles and chatted with us. They had moved to Netzer Hazani a few weeks before in a show of solidarity.

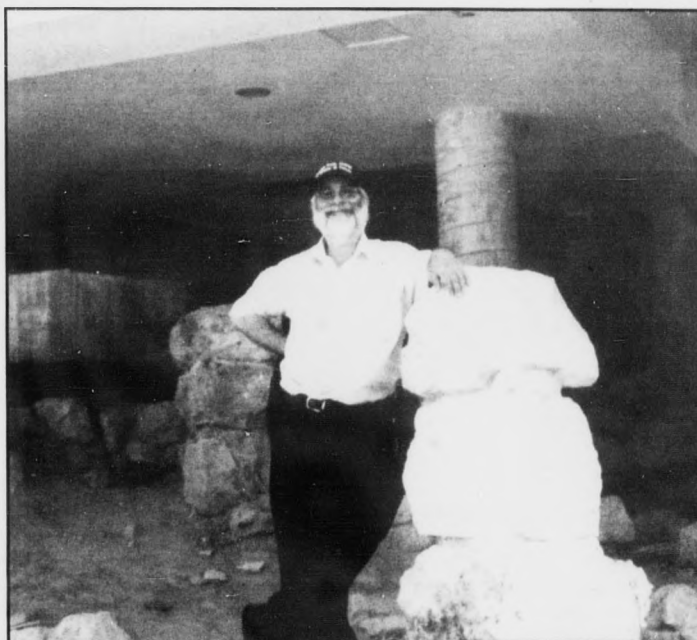
Rachel and Moshe Saperstein, residents of Neve Dekalim, greeted us with warm hospital-

ity. They have become dear friends whose ability to remain optimistic and even good-humored in these difficult times is remarkable.

Nadia Matar, who makes up one-half of the Women-In-Green team with her mother-in-law, Ruth, has moved her family into a caravan at Kfar Yam. As our group climbed the sand dune up to her new home, Nadia greeted us warmly and requested that we make ourselves comfortable on her "terrace." Indeed, the view of the sea and the setting sun was spectacular. Sitting there and listening to Nadia, it was hard to believe that a Jewish government would find any logic at all in transferring Jews off their land.

She encouraged us to go to the former Palm Beach Hotel which was just down the road and which we promptly visited. Baruch Marzel, an old friend from Hebron, was there and explained the great effort that was being made to restore the hotel sufficiently so that protestors to the Sharon plan could go there to live, to prevent the expulsion.

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David Wilder at the Tel Rumeida, Hebron.

Israel: As I See It

Fight terror, not Jews

By SAMSON KRUPNICK

In the past week there were over 100 Kassam rockets over



Gush Katif in addition to the Hamas suicide attack in Netanya. We suffered casualties on both accounts. The two generals, Prime Minister Ariel Sharon and Minister of Defense Shaul Mofaz, issued orders to proceed at once and at all costs to complete this cursed disengagement disaster.

The growing resentment among members of the Knesset and among the many Likud Party members seems to have no effect upon these two generals accustomed to giving orders and having those orders obeyed. That a majority of the public is against this disengagement, and even more upon the dictatorial procedures and arrogant attitudes, apparently does not bother these two.

We had offered a plan of moving the entire Gush Katif to Nitzanim, the north Gush Katif, now having suffered 5,835 Kassams with many casualties and much damage. That plan was adopted by both Gush Katif members and by the prime minister.

We emphasized that all should be moved as permanent housing is made available, and they would move their hot house industry. Doing it properly and with care would take a little more time, but the transition would be accepted by virtually all Jews.

The Arabs never lived in Gush Katif because it is mostly sand. Hence the Jews developed an entire industry in hot houses with controlled temperature and an assembly line production and packing, providing almost 100 percent of insect-free vegetables in Israel. They also developed a growing export market.

Moving them properly would be an excellent solution. No soldiers would be necessary to hold arm by arm

in one long line forbidding any Jew to enter Gush Katif. First of all, you chase away the many customers who buy their products. Second of all, you make of Gush Katif "outlaws and criminals" facing a hostile Israel Defense Forces, whose function is the defense of Jews.

"There is no room for two states here. Arabs will live here, but no independent state."

All the protesters, including many rabbis, oppose vacating any of our land, promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and to their offspring forever. Christians insist that this

The forbidding of Jews to visit any part of our land is an illegal act, regardless of who orders it. Calling it a "military zone" as a gimmick to keep Jews out of Gush Katif is shameful. The forbidding of guests to come to a wedding, bar mitzvah, brit, or other happy occasion is brutal and very much unJewish. These measures should be discontinued immediately.

The respect of all Jews must be the conduct of all officials, all soldiers, and particularly the two rigid generals. The principle of the great sage Rabbi Akivah, "Thou shalt love thy fellow Jew as thyself is the essence of the Torah," should apply here.

The forbidding of Jews to visit any part of our land is an illegal act, regardless of who orders it. Calling it a "military zone" as a gimmick to keep Jews out of Gush Katif is shameful. The forbidding of guests to come to a wedding, bar mitzvah, brit, or other happy occasion is brutal and very much unJewish. These measures should be discontinued immediately.

The two generals have already gained many enemies. An election now would certainly end the careers of both of them. As to the many marches and protests, their position is understandable. This is our land. There is no room for two states.

The Palestine Authority has the same approach. The sole state should be Palestine. This was the goal of terrorist Yasser Arafat and remains the same of Chairman Abbas. All Arab maps and books show our land as "sacred Arab land."

The late Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin confided to us,

is our land and not that of the Arabs. Intelligent and knowledgeable Muslims agree that this is our land and the Arab peninsula the land of the Arabs. Some 50,000 or more will march in protest at the vacating of Gush Katif.

Very vital now is to resume immediately to fight terror as we did previously with pinpoint targeting of the leaders who plan, who supply, and who transport terrorists. Regrettably, the so-called "cease-fire" has given the terrorists time to reorganize and resupply.

With the help of the Almighty we shall overcome.

Samson Krupnick may be reached at 22 Pinsky, Jerusalem 92228, Israel; krup@012.net.il.

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Bit of Wit

Snippets

From RABBI SAM SILVER

Groom: Why do I have to step on the glass?

Rabbi: It may be the last time you get to put your foot down.

I'm a Reform rabbi. When

my sons were with youngsters who bragged about their fathers, one of my sons said, "You think your daddy's tough? Mine is a graduate of reform school."

Son: I'll be good for \$10.

Mom: why don't you be like your father and be good for nothing?

He was active in Shabbat services; he squirmed during the sermon.



Jews by Choice

A talk with the *mikutanim*

By MARY HOFMANN

Of late, John and I are really getting to know our *mikutanim*.



Our beloved Cathy's husband, Ben, and their two perfect children have been an integral part, if not a central focus, of our lives for the past couple of years.

Ben's parents, who live several miles out of town, have been friendly, cheerful, but somewhat enigmatic. Ben, after all, is converting to Judaism, so their son and only grandchildren are and will continue to be following a faith different from the Methodist Church, where they have been leaders for most of their married life.

The kids' wedding was Jewish, and Ben's folks were really good sports. They helped John and me support the *chuppah*, hosted the reception in their spacious and lovely garden, and participated cheerfully. What they may have been thinking was never mentioned, and we've all treated the situation as a sort of mysterious given.

Lately we've been going through a sort of extended family trauma which I may or may not detail at a later day, but because of it, John and I are finding ourselves seeing the in-laws far more than before. Since we're dealing now with issues of greater importance than the pleasantries of shared grandparenthood and social niceties, we figured it was time to seriously broach the religion issue.

Ben's mom has always seemed more approachable and more obviously supportive — she came to my b'nai mitzvah, attended an adult class once, and is very careful to omit Jesus when saying dinner blessings in our presence. His dad, on the other hand, has never shown any active interest, has come to nothing, and seems to withdraw silently if

the subject is broached.

John and I sat with them in their living room the other night, playing with the babies, when I just up and said, "You know, we need to talk about religion. I know this whole conversion thing must be difficult for you, but since it's a fact of life, I really think we need to deal with it."

When I looked straight into the dad's eyes and said I felt withdrawal on his part when the subject is raised, he laughed. "It's not withdrawal, Mary, it's sheer ignorance... and maybe a reluctance to admit that fact." Amazing!

"We're just glad he's involved in a faith community," added Ben's mom. "We're pretty liberal Methodists, you know, and as long as Ben and Cathy and the kids have a community of people involved with God to be part of, that's the most important thing."

I was pretty flabbergasted, frankly. Religion's always such a loaded issue (I knew our politics are nicely aligned, so religion was the big one) that it's often hard to discuss without emotion. But if ignorance, and concern about being ignorant, is the issue, how delightful it will be to resolve!

Now I'm looking forward with enthusiasm to knowing them better. If they can trust that we're not out to convert them but want them to be comfortable and knowledgeable about participating with their grandchildren's religious life, it will be a far happier and healthier situation.

John and I aren't "social" folk. The idea of simply socializing is painful for both of us. We don't do cocktail parties or other getting-together-for-getting-together's sake.

How wonderful it could be to spend time with these people, demystifying that which is central to our lives.

How wonderful it could be if they were part of that part of our lives.

How wonderful it could be to finally have them feel like real family. *Mikutanim*.

Nice.

Mary Hofmann welcomes comments at 198 E. 26th St., Merced, CA 95340

Musings

Thirty-five years

By BATYA MEDAD

It's hard to believe, but 35 years ago we were packing our



meager possessions to bring to Israel on *aliyah*. My husband and I had just gotten married, and we sublet an apartment from a young couple who were working in a Jewish camp.

Our life as a young American-Jewish couple was not only short, it had no real meaning. Literally we were just waiting for our boat to leave port. That was in 1970. It's hard to realize how much Israel has changed since then.

Yes, we sailed on a boat for almost two weeks, until we docked at Haifa Port, after Shabbat on the 5th of September, 1970. We were among the 400 American Jews making *aliyah*, the largest number of American Jews to arrive at the same time until the first Nefesh B'Nefesh flight over 30 years later. Please correct me if I'm wrong. At least that's what I've understood from the news accounts.

The Israel that received us was so different, far and removed from the New York we had just left. Materially and convenience-wise it was another generation, another world. For example, there weren't enough telephone lines, and a year's wait was considered good and efficient. My cousin and her family who made *aliyah* four years after us had to wait over five years for a line.

Many families were still grateful for small electric refrigerators, the size I remembered from American motels. These were an improvement over the "ice boxes" still used in the post-independence 1950s. A neighbor, my age, who grew up in Jerusalem, tells of having freshly *shechted*, slaughtered, chickens during three-day holidays because there was no refrigeration. Her mother would salt and soak (according to Jewish law) and then cook the freshly slaughtered chicken

for the holiday meals.

In 1970 it was much easier, though I had to be very organized cooking on my two-burner hotplate. I saw many family kitchens with no more than that and an oven that looked more like a large toaster oven. Delicious cakes were baked in *sirei pele*, wonder pots. (They are special baking pans for baking on top of the stove. Learning how to bake in them was one of the fun challenges for *olim chadashim*, new immigrants in my day. My friend Sybil is famous for her cookbook *The Wonders of a Wonder Pot*.)

Most travel was by bus; very few people had private cars. And those who did knew that their cars could be called up for military service. Yes, the army didn't have enough vehicles, so cars did *milu'im*, reserve duty.

Plastic bags were almost unheard of. Going vegetable shopping in the *shuk*, open market, was a very different experience. Paper napkins were rare and hardly worth the decorative effect. And I don't even want to start describing the toilet paper.

We bought yellow cheese by weight, and only when the shopkeeper saw me did he cut it on clean white paper. When I wasn't around, he placed the cheese on newspaper, the cheapest and most plentiful wrapping paper available at that time.

Less than a year after our arrival I learned about Israeli baby care. Newborns were swathed in diapers and receiving blankets of various sizes. Neither pins

nor rubber pants were used on tiny babies. Luckily my mother brought a full layette from New York. Two years ago, when my first grandchild was born, I told my mother that we'd shop here, where baby clothes are now better and reasonably priced.

Yes, things have changed. And we've changed. Materially, things are better, but Israel has lost its innocence and confidence. That charismatic *chutzpah* is harder to find. Nowadays you can only find it in some *yeshuvim*, and it's strongest in those lofty hilltop communities, the ones that American President Bush and other busybodies feel threatened by. I guess that they don't like the spark of Zionism, of pure Judaism, because they can't control those under its spell.

I can't imagine what my life would have been like if I hadn't made *aliyah* 35 years ago. It was the most natural thing for us. We came without ever saying maybe, without ever thinking it an experiment, without any back-up plan to return to America "if." It's our home. No regrets.

I sincerely hope that this season's *olim chadashim* will be as satisfied and joyful with their lives as Israelis as we are.

Batya Medad lives in Shiloh, Israel. Her "Musings" started as "a therapeutic response to the terror that has been plaguing Israel." She welcomes comments at: shilohmuse@yahoo.com; <http://shilohmusings.blogspot.com>; <http://me-ander.blogspot.com>.

Spirituality Corner

Where is God?

By RABBI SAMUEL SILVER

Where is God? He cannot be seen. But because he cannot be seen doesn't mean He doesn't exist. Something can be real even if we can't clasp or behold it. So it is with God.

We cannot gaze at Him, but we can see the products of His creation: the great universe and its unbreakable laws; the process of nature; the extra bravery that comes to a person armed with faith; the love that prompts us to labor on behalf of others and on behalf of noble endeavors; the skill of the doctor; the will of the mother; the

patience of the grandmother.

You can't see electricity, but you feel its effects. You can't see conscience, but it is an effective monitor. I call it a soul phone.

Where is God? We see the results of His creativity: the world about us, the world inside of us, and the love that He imparts and implants within our hearts. We need the stamina that belief in God can bring. And God needs us to reveal the fruits of His affections for us.

Where is God? He can be found in the souls of his children.

Gothic in Gotham

Story and Photos by SHOSHANA HARPER

In the Lower East Side of New York sits a neogothic building designed as a synagogue in 1849 by Berlin architect Alexander Seltzer. Inspiration for Seltzer's design came from the cathedral of Cologne and the German romantic movement of Heinrich Heine and Beethoven.

During its heyday the building served as a house of worship for the burgeoning Reform Jewish Movement in America. Many such buildings have long since disappeared as the Yiddish-speaking residents of the post-World War II era faded to other parts of the city and new multi-ethnic and multi-lingual immigrants inhabited the area.

Gone also are dozens of other synagogues. However, this building, located on 172 Norfolk St., south of Houston and north of famed Delancey Street, had new life breathed into it in the 1980s.

Sculptor Angel Orensanz purchased the building in 1986 to serve as a studio for his work. In 1992, along with a group of artists inspired by Orensanz's work, the Angel Orensanz Foundation was created. The foundation hosts numerous cultural events at the site and elsewhere, produces a quarterly magazine of the arts, and cooperates with other well known institutions to develop educational and artistic projects.

In addition to the building's use as a cultural venue, it also hosts numerous private events throughout the year.

During the July 4th weekend I had the opportunity to attend one such event – the wedding of New York City couple Nina Watkins and Bradley Goodman.

In keeping with the theme of a synagogue, the couple was married by a young Reform rabbi under a *chuppah* made of simple branches and some greenery. The Sephardic custom of wrapping the couple in



The inside of the Angel Orensanz Building features architectural details resembling the cathedral

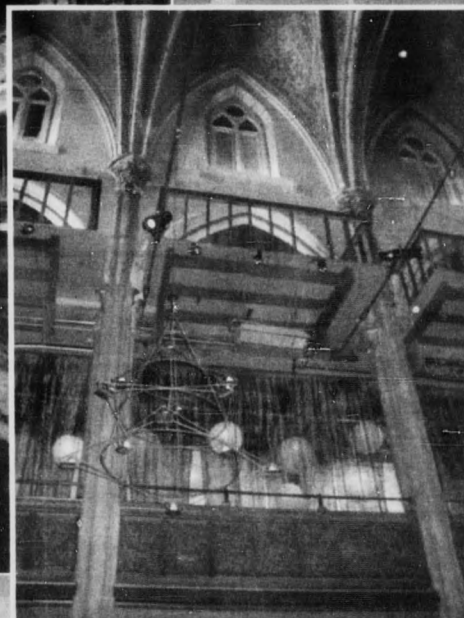


Photo courtesy of Angel Orensanz Foundation.



Guests lift the bride and groom in celebration.

a *talis*, prayer shawl, was especially meaningful as the *talis* used was that of the groom's

Continued on next page

Book Reviews

Bread, bread, bread

By SYBIL KAPLAN

A Blessing of Bread. By Maggie Glezer. Artisan. \$35.

In 1987, Freda Reider, a California teacher, produced a fascinating and informative book called *The Hallah Book*, including 21 different forms of challah with photographs and diagrams and directions created by a diverse group of Jewish communities.

Now Maggie Glezer, a teacher and American Institute of Baking certified baker from Atlanta, has brought together another book with 60 recipes for challah and other Sabbath loaves, rituals, anecdotes, folk tales, and almost 100 wonderful photographs.

Everything about this cookbook makes it a favorite of mine. Most important are the stories about the origins and the people who made the recipes. We know how much each recipe makes, how much time is required, the skill level and, a really nice touch, a recipe synopsis in the beginning.

Did you know there are Ten Divine Commands concerning bread? Why do we cover the Shabbat bread? Why do some people toss bread, others tear, and others cut? What makes a Czernowitzer challah different from a Russian or Lithuanian challah? Who eats Roscas and when? Who serves Barbari, and what is Za'atar Pita?

All of the answers and more are here.

After a chatty introduction explaining how Glezer happened to write this book, we are introduced to breads by category, the genesis of challah, a baker's primer, the many shapes of challah, and sourdough essentials.

Other chapters include breads from the Ashkenazi tradition, breads from the Sephardic tradition, breads from the North African tradition, breads from the Near Eastern tradition, new traditions, and the mitzvah of challah.

There are breads from: Czernowitz (the Vienna of Eastern Europe), Guatemala, Russia, Lithuania, Poland, Hungary, Rhodes, Greece, Turkey, Syria, Ethiopia, Morocco, Egypt, Iran, Yemen, Israel, Bukhara (Uzbekistan), Iraq, Persia, Azerbaijan, and some modern breads from America that have not yet become traditions.

There are sources and a bibliography at the end.

liography at the end.

This is really a lovely and informative gift book for anyone who likes to bake, anyone who bakes challah, or anyone interested in Jewish food origins.

Jewish Caribbean

A Travel Guide to the Jewish Caribbean & South America. By Ben G. Frank. Pelican Publishing. 560 pages. \$25.

Ben Frank is a delightful, authoritative travel writer who has written a number of Jewish travel guides including *A Travel Guide to Jewish Europe* and *A Travel Guide to Jewish Russia & Ukraine*.

What makes Frank's books special is the way in which he makes them practical and interesting and usually fills a need because something similar does not exist.

Included in his latest book are Brazil, Curacao, Aruba and the Dutch Islands, St. Thomas and St. Croix, Puerto Rico, Cuba, Jamaica, Martinique and Guadeloupe, Argentina, Uruguay, Chile, Peru, Costa Rica, Panama, and Mexico.

He begins each chapter with background and history, proceeds to notable people and Jewry, mentions particular cities and sites, synagogues, kosher food, schools, social service and Jewish organizations, and concludes with a reading list.

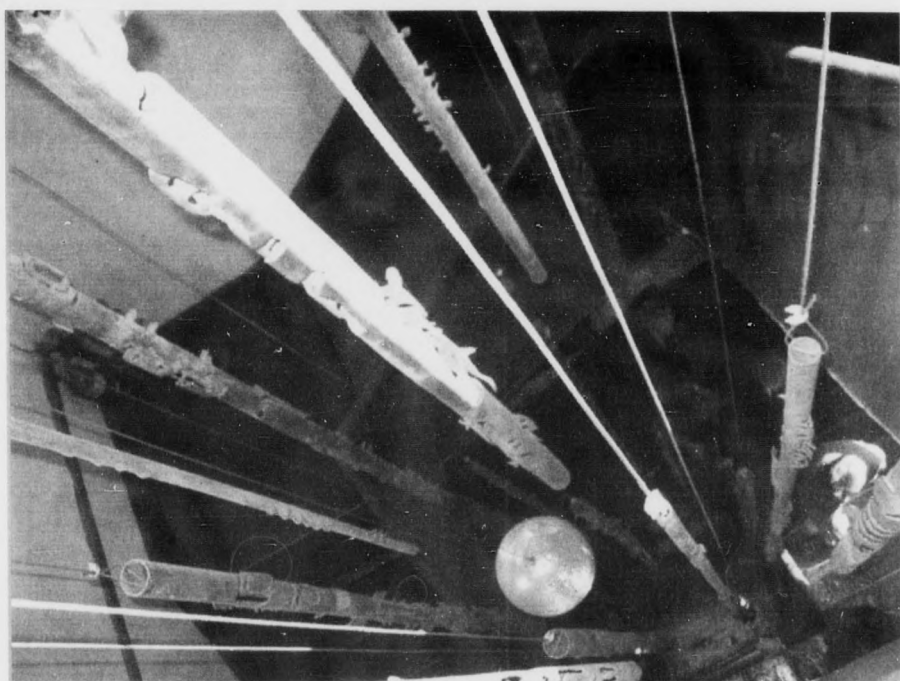
One learns Sao Paulo, Brazil, has many synagogues and a Chabad center, is Brazil's largest city, and is the Jewish capital of the country. Curacao is the most important island in the Caribbean from a Jewish point of view.

Many of the Caribbean synagogues have sandy floors reminiscent of the 40 years the Israelites wandered in the desert or perhaps to remember when they put sand on the floors to muffle sounds when they were praying in secret.

The synagogue in St. Thomas is the oldest synagogue building in continuous use under the American flag. There are 1,500 Jews in Cuba. Jamaica has 200 Jews determined to keep their synagogue open, functioning, and alive. Buenos Aires has a kosher McDonald's in a mall and is closed on the Sabbath.

All but one of the synagogues in Uruguay are Orthodox. Santiago, Chile has a volunteer fire department

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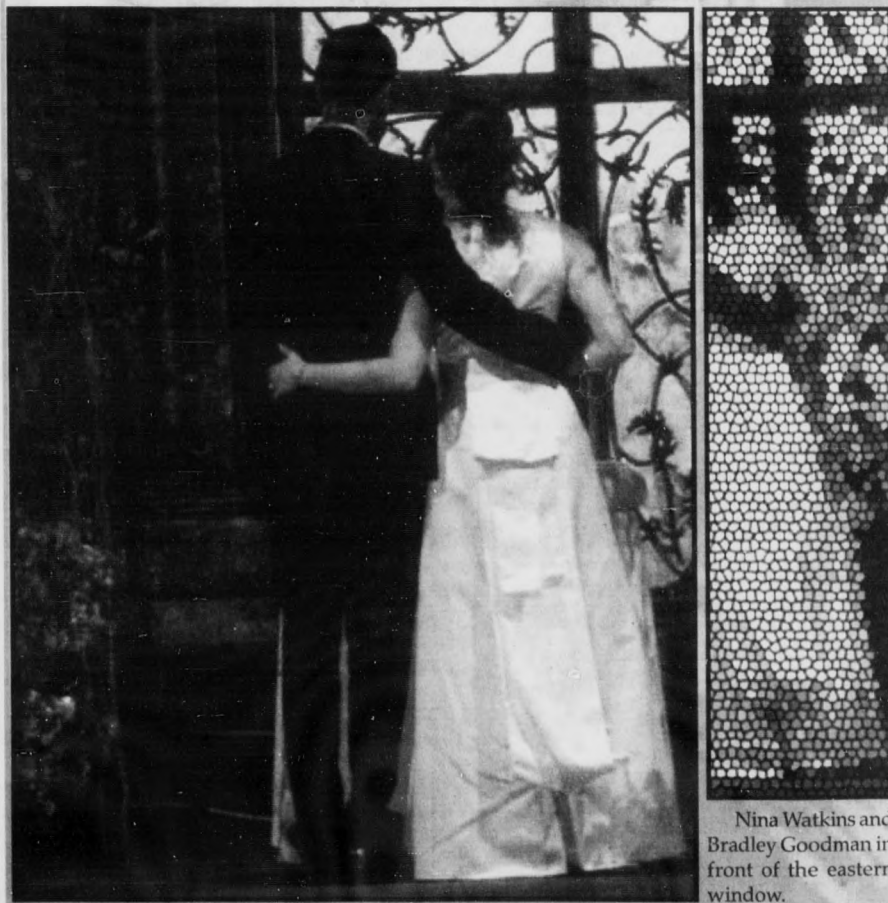
A sculpture by Angel Orensanz hangs in the narrow stairway leading from the main floor, which served as the sanctuary to the upper balconies. The piece gave the feeling of bells.

grandfather.

On the old *bimah*, surrounding the chuppah, were candles. As the couple and the guests faced the eastern wall, one could see the original Star of David brightened by the light coming through the windows.

A wonderful klezmer band completed the event, providing music prior to, during, and after the ceremony. To the enjoyment of all, the group spontaneously joined hands for circle dances and lifted the bride and groom in celebration.

Information on the Angel Orensanz Foundation and the facility can be found on their website: www.angelorensanz.com.



Nina Watkins and Bradley Goodman in front of the eastern window.

Leapman Gertel

Continued from page 5
after a Heavenly model.

The *tallit* bag, however, alludes to our privacies, those ornate yet concealed territories so precious to Rabbi Shimon. The next time you attend a Torah service, glance around at those *tallit* bags placed on pews and seats. Note how superbly styled are these covers for a cloth that brings us back to God and our obligations.

Mitzvot may be conducted in public, but as the *tallit* rests unseen in a parcel, so do the commandments come to nestle within our sacred and sequestered realms of heart and soul. The choice of ritual art is a statement of the spirit denoting how a person fuses outwardly communal Jewish duties with the inner maturation of one created in God's Image. This abode is beyond words, as it should be!

Understand our rites poetically. If the art in our homes is placed to "make a statement," what statement do we make when we arrive to pray? How is the individual heart emboldened by what we select to adorn tools and attire given to us to continue the duties of Sinai?

This isn't only about a *tallit* bag. What of the Haggadah, a menorah, the shape and style of a *yad*, the weave of a *kippah* or Torah cover? Judaism speaks to its adherents not only through rabbis and writings, but artisans and inventors. Understand our rites poetically. A harvest of colors convenes to honor the amazing expanses within a soul, a dominion never tightly anchored to verbiage or our deeds, neither to what we do nor what we are seen doing.

Rabbis Shimon and Judah implore us as moral and humane visionaries. To be a Jew means to better this world. However, both sages remind us, the greater community must reciprocate to sustain our inner worlds. As a flask is necessary to wine and as families harbor souls, so, too, what God placed in our hearts marks our ultimate *menschlichkeit*.

Rabbi Leapman is affiliated with Temple Beth-El in South Bend, Ind. A former Navy chaplain with interests in pastoral counseling and interfaith relations, he serves on the CCAR Task Force on Addictions and Recovery as well as writes creatively.

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with his own uncertainty and near depression. She said, "Mr. Zanuck would like to know if it would be convenient for you to meet with him Monday night at 10 p.m."

When Wincelberg was later offered a seven-year contract at Fox Studios, there was a stipulation in it that he would not be required to work on the Sabbath or Jewish holidays.

After two years, upon Zanuck's retirement, Wincelberg started writing for television, beginning with "Have Gun, Will Travel" and "Naked City." On "Have Gun, Will Travel" he introduced religiously observant Jewish characters Nathan and Rivka Shotness.³

He has written over 100 television scripts and several plays and books. He was the first writer to combine a successful Hollywood career with observance of the Jewish Sabbath, festivals, and dietary laws. He also wrote a play about the Holocaust, "Resort 76," that was anthologized in a volume, *Theatre of the Holocaust*,⁴ and most recently attracted large audiences at the Museum of Tolerance in Los Angeles.

Anita Marateck Wincelberg was raised in the Fort Apache section of the Bronx by religiously observant parents, Jacob and Bryna Marateck, who had emigrated from Poland. Her father's colorful memoirs of military service in the Russo-Japanese war became the basis of a volume written by Shimon, *The Samurai of Vishograd*.⁵

Anita first "met" Shimon by happening to read one of his short stories, "Honeymoon," while coming home on the subway from night courses at Hunter College. She recalls being critical of the way he portrayed women. Upon returning home at 10:45 p.m. and looking through the mail, she found a postcard from Wincelberg.

As it happened, his sister had seen Anita at the wedding of her own sister-in-law and prodded this sister-in-law to tell Anita, a close friend, to call the young man when she would be vacationing in California. Anita preferred that the young man write her first if he was interested. She had no idea when she read the story in *Best American Short Stories* that the writer was that young man.

Shimon and Anita were married not long after they met and settled in Los Angeles as he began his writing career. Shimon kept up with his religious studies at Rabbi Simcha Wasserman's yeshiva. Rabbi Simcha would say, "We may be in Hollywood, but we are not of Hollywood."

Anita was inspired to take a writing workshop at UCLA in order to better understand and assist with Shimon's work.

Anita and Shimon became close to two of Anita's classmates who worked on writing projects with her and eventually married each other. This couple, Richard and Esther Shapiro, later created the successful TV series "Dynasty." Before that, they were head writers of the popular soap opera "Love of Life," and they invited the Wincelbergs to join the staff, which they did for a while. The episode of "Naked City" was the Wincelbergs' other major writing collaboration.

Anita went on to earn a master's degree in counseling and psychology from Loyola-Marymount University, and she finds professional satisfaction in pre-marital, marital, and individual therapy in private practice and at the Orthodox Counseling Program of Jewish Family Service. She is proud that "Jewish values, whether labeled or otherwise," have permeated Shimon's work.

Benign coincidences fill the episode they wrote together for "Naked City." It was surely enhanced by Anita's psychological insights, particularly into women. Yet the episode is not about coincidences. It is, Anita told me, based on her experiences one night when she visited her dressmaker on the Lower East Side.

She saw an elderly Jewish woman wandering in the street. The woman told her that she had been fired from her job. Anita took her to a police station and, when that did not prove helpful, found a place where the old woman could stay until her daughter could be located.

The writers are attempting to do something far more subtle and meaningful than providing a study in coincidences or a lesson in Jewish terminology. They have taken a fretful, complaining, disoriented, and

abandoned older woman and made her stand for a culture or tradition which, however fragmented in modern times, still possesses a warmth and a power to deter frivolous and thoughtless actions.

The woman may be self-absorbed, but she has legitimate fears; she knows she is lost and cries out to find her way home. The younger woman does not even know that she herself is lost and in danger as she drifts into situations where her dignity and maybe even her life are at risk.

The old lady can comfort herself by singing the words of a Yiddish lullaby. She can remember having stayed once at a "fine hotel in Krakow." She has the blessing of having had a past – friends, motherhood (even if her children neglect her) – a tradition. She can question the motives of would-be friends because she has had real ones, and hence she can observe, "In the cemetery I got friends."

The point here is that even a nagging, self-pitying voice can be a morally instructive one if it calls others to their duty to help the "widow and orphan," to use the biblical phrase, and if it distracts them from doing something foolish.

To be continued.

¹ On Herbert B. Leonard, see Elliot B. Gertel, *Over The Top Judaism: Precedents and Trends in the Depiction of Jewish Beliefs and Observances in Film and Television* (Ithaca: University Press of America, 2003), p. 30.

² Oral history of Shimon and Anita Marateck Wincelberg, by Rabbi Elliot B. Gertel, 1999, 2003.

³ See Jonathan Pearl and Judith Pearl, *The Chosen Image: Television's Portrayal of Jewish Themes and Characters* (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland and Company, 1999), pp. 24, 47, 50, 59, 68-9, 72.

⁴ The second edition discusses Wincelberg's play in the Preface. See Robert Skloot, ed., *The Theatre of the Holocaust*, Vol. 1 (Madison: University of Wisconsin, 1999).

⁵ See Shimon Wincelberg, *Samurai of Vishograd: The Notebook of Jacob Marateck* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1976).

ages of radical Islam, whereas France, for all its political failings, has retained a sense of self that may yet see it through.

Mr. Pipes is director of the Middle East Forum and author of "Miniatures" (Transaction Publishers); www.DanielPipes.org.

Freedman

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There are plans to put up a tent city on the beach to house hundreds more who wish to come. Of course the Sharon government has already begun to demonize these people, spreading false rumors of "suicide attackers" and "Jews who would shoot." This sounds like the way is being paved for government provocateurs.

Esther Bazak hosted us in Neve Dekalim, telling us the story of her long-time residence in the community. She introduced Rachel Klein, a poet, who read some of her "Ban the Plan" poetry. They join the hosts of remarkable women who live in Gush Katif and are fighting the expulsion plan in the way they know best.

Professor Israel Hanokoglu is a brilliant physicist whom we visited at the College of Judea and Samaria. The professor told us the story of being arrested by the police in Rishon Le Zion because he was handing out anti-expulsion stickers. After being threatened with having his hands broken and his car towed, he was put into a jail cell with Rabbi Levinger from Hebron.

He told us that the good news was that during the night hundreds of people arrived carrying *tefillin* and prayer books, and the morning prayer services and studying were spiritually uplifting. There was the prevailing belief in the destruction of the false governmental structure built without Torah.

Traveling north to the northern Shomron, we met the good people of Homesh who are trying to hold the line against the evacuation. We also witnessed the work of the rapid response teams being trained by Mishmeret Yesha.

In Sanur, originally an

Pipes

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historic culture. This contrast in matters of identity makes Great Britain the Western country most vulnerable to the rav-



Anita Tucker addressing the Chizuk mission in Netzer Hazani.

artists' colony of Russian immigrants, now the home of many Yeshiva students, we met with Rav Waldman from Kiryat Arba, who moved with his wife to a caravan in the threatened community. Twenty-five of his Yeshiva students relocated with him. He spoke to our group, stressing that the government has broken its social contract between itself and its citizens.

MK Prof. Arie Eldad, who has also moved to Sanur with his wife and family in a show of solidarity, and who conducted a march from Sanur to Gush Katif to arouse concern about the expulsion plan, was unable to greet us at Sanur that afternoon of our visit. He was at the prison in Ramle where 14-year-old Jewish girls were imprisoned for civil disobedience.

However, he visited us that evening at the Ashel HaShomron hotel in Ariel. His message was a chilling one, as he told us he is raising money to build two field hospitals which he believes will be necessary to treat the wounded at Sanur and in Gush Katif. He is a strong proponent of civil disobedience, calling for everyone, in whatever way possible, to refuse to participate in any action that would assist the expulsion forces. His principled and unwavering stand against Sharon's evil plan gives one strength to continue the battle against all odds.

Daniella Weiss, mayor of Kedumim, was also at the prison in Ramle, lending support. When we visited with her later in the afternoon, she encouraged us to give

funds to Friends of Kedumim, earmarked for Sanur, so that new families coming in would have some necessities in their tent homes.

At Gilad Farm, named after Gilad Zar, a victim of Arab terrorism, we were pleased to see that Ittai Zar and his wife, Bety, were now living in a thriving community of at least a dozen caravans. We had been to the farm when the police and soldiers were constantly tearing it down. How wonderful to see that good prevailed.

At Adei Ad, a hilltop community near Shilo, we spoke with Moshe Tanier, in charge of security, who patrols on horseback with his men. He credits Izzy Danziger and Mishmeret Yesha with whatever security assistance he gets.

At Elon Moreh, near Shechem, our good friends Pinchas Fuchs and Rabbi Felix met with us. The community has long been in a dangerous location, and the brave people who live there are among the heroes of our times in Israel.

Danny Halamish became a new friend as we daringly ventured down a narrow road in the Judean Desert to visit a new community, Rehavaam Zevi. Although their guns were taken away from them by the Israeli army, the residents refuse to build a fence around their *yishuv* to protect themselves against Arab terrorism. They proudly showed us the new synagogue in a caravan and talked about the new baby that had just been born to the Halamish family. Their courage and dedication to the land was extremely moving.

Chaim Silberstein, devoted

to rebuilding Jewish east Jerusalem and the grave of Mother Rachel, took us on a great tour of the new communities, imbuing us all with the need to contribute to buying land in east Jerusalem so that Jews may once again reclaim their heritage. With the huge problem of massive illegal Arab building everywhere, it is critically important to hold onto all of Jerusalem.

Dan Luria, from Ateret Cohanim, joined Chaim in showing us the work that the Jerusalem Reclamation Project is doing. House by house, stone by stone, is being reclaimed with great effort and cost. It is a daunting, but necessary, task.

Guy Yanofsky, of Ateret Cohanim, guided us on a Shabbat tour of the Old City, enabling us to see from the rooftops the incredible sprawl of the illegal Arab building and the desperate efforts of the Jews to hold onto their claim to Jewish homes in the Old City of Jerusalem.

Yoram Ettinger was a guest speaker at our Shabbat lunch and spoke brilliantly about the terrorist threat to America that would be the result of Israeli retreat and concessions to terrorism.

David Bedein, our Saturday night speaker, gave us an excellent talk on how we can best use the media and the Congress to influence the situation in Israel.

Rabbi Richman of the Temple Mount Institute guided us around the Temple Mount on Sunday morning. All the proper religious rituals were followed in preparation for this visit. In addition, we had to remove anything, other than *kipot*, that would identify us as Jews. The experience would have been an uplifting one, to be in the holiest place on earth for Jews, except for the humiliation we had to suffer at the hands of Israeli police and Waqf Muslim guards.

On the trip to Hebron, Yehudit Tayar, involved with security and rescue forces, accompanied us and spoke about her work. Yosef Begun, a famous Russian refusenik, also joined us. He described how the events of June 6, 1967, brought pride and hope to Russian Jews, and that date marked the beginning of his refusenik efforts.

In Hebron, David Wilder, spokesman for the community and good friend, met us and gave us a first-class tour of the Jewish areas in the city. We met Noam Arnon, another good friend and activist, along with Elisheva and Noam Federman. Noam is still under house arrest after many years of being detained by the Israeli police.

Yifat Akobi, a dear friend who had been our tour guide years ago, before husband and family, met us on Tel Rumeida in her new home. The caravans are being displaced by Admot Yishai, a new apartment complex, as well as some other buildings that have been restored. It was thrilling to see the growth after so many years of stalling on the part of the government.

The crowning experience of our solidarity mission was marching with the Gush Katif float on Yom Yerushalayim. Jerusalem was celebrating the reunification of the city that occurred on June 6, 1967, and we were celebrating with her.

We marched, all in orange, waving our Gush Katif flags and banners, and received constant cheers and encour-

agement from the onlookers. Photographers along the way took our pictures. TV cameras caught us marching proudly, responding to the enthusiastic crowds with calls of "Gush Katif forever."

Our farewell dinner at the magnificent Botanic Gardens in Jerusalem was topped off by a visit from AFSI's chairman, Herbert Zweibon. He called for changes in the electoral system that would do away with the corruption that pollutes the Sharon government today and spoke about new leaders who would emerge to challenge the Likud for leadership.

These are the heroes and heroines of Israel today. It is because of them, and so many thousands more, that we feel certain the illegal, immoral, indecent Sharon expulsion plan will fail.

We went on our solidarity mission to give the Israelis *chizuk*, strength, and as always, we returned strengthened by them.

Helen Freedman is executive director of Americans For a Safe Israel (AFSI): 1623 Third Ave., Suite 205, New York, NY 10128; 212-828-2424.



Rav Eliezer and Rebbetzin Waldman at entrance to their caravan in Sanur.

Letters

FREEDOM OF THE PRESS — The Post and Opinion encourages readers to send letters. All letters to the editor should be addressed to The Jewish Post and Opinion, 238 S. Meridian St., Suite 502, Indianapolis, IN 46225, or by e-mail: jpost@jewishpostopinion.com.

Nobody has monopoly on zeal for human life

Dear editor,

Rabbi Avi Shafran's "observant eye" that "listens to stem cells" is, at first blush, a statement regarding Jewish ethics. He appeals to "intelligent and sensitive" souls and contends that the issue of stem cell research is complicated. By complicated he means that the rabbinic leaders of Agudath Israel have not reached a consensus on this matter.

Rabbi Shafran then appeals to the miracle of life and a brief history of the cloning enterprise, then adds that we must wait for "a consensus of Torah scholars."

After the Talmud came to closure, there is no leading body of rabbis that is authorized to speak to and for all Israel as the high court of Jewish religious authority. R. Moshe D. Tendler, a rabbinical judge and Ph.D. in biology, has no problem with stem cell research.

Stems cells are not babies. While abortion is not to be used as the birth control of the careless, halakhically protected birth begins with childbirth. And Maimonides argues that we follow "the opinion that makes sense" and not the consensus of rabbis, especially when minority voices may be more logical.

Rabbi Shafran has every right to follow the consensus of Agudath Israel's learned leaders. But there are other learned leaders with other perspectives. One does not

show respect by deferring.

The founder of the Yeshiva Movement taught in Ruah Hayyim 1:3, a commentary to Ethics of the Fathers, that we may not defer if we are convinced we are right. I believe that Rabbi Tendler's reading is correct because his view is the most logical. We are not forbidden to destroy cells, we are forbidden to destroy human life.

Appeals to emotion and the sanctity of life are out of place here. Those who advocate stem cell research have every bit as much zeal for the sanctity of life. No group within Orthodoxy has a right to claim that it stands alone in authenticity and fervor.

The issue is not what God commanded, but who has the right to speak on God's behalf; the matter of stem cell research and Torah must be decided on the defining of the relevant religious values responding to the most accurate science. Torah authenticity focuses upon the best reading of the canon and not the prestige of any elect or select group of rabbis.

Rabbi Alan J. Yuter

Lost: moral compass

Dear editor,

A journalist, working with the media outlet Arutz Sheva (Channel 7), was witness to a brutal attack by police on a protestor against the expulsion of Jews from Gush Katif/Gaza. The attack occurred in the city of Ramat Gan near Tel Aviv. The protestor, bloodied, was taken to the local police station, questioned, beaten again, and then released.

The incident is not an isolated one. The prime minister describes protestors as "gangs who would undermine the country" and against whom he has ordered police and defense forces to adopt an "iron fist" policy.

The Israeli media, always ready to jump on a story of brutality against Arabs, have ignored these incidents. In fact the media described a situation where an Arab was injured following an Arab stoning attack on Jews to which Jews responded as a "lynching." The "lynch" victim was later seen walking away from the scene. The courts have sided with the police in most cases. The Knesset on the whole remains silent.

There are many who insist that the expulsion from Gush Katif/Gaza is a *fait accompli* and that civil disobedience will not work. The actions of the Sharon government send a different message. The thrashing around of officials in Israel suggests that the government takes the action in "the street" very seriously.

The most powerful country in the Middle East — determined to retreat in the face of Arab terror and U.S. pressure — has arrested and jailed 12-year-old girls and has threatened to take these children from their parents.

Confronting Jews who participate in civil disobedience with violence is an additional tool in the tearing apart of the fabric of Israeli society. Prime Minister Sharon has lost his moral compass.

Herbert Zweibon
Chairman
Americans For a Safe Israel

Kaplan

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made up of Jews. Peru has Iquitos Jews, descendants of Jewish men and native Amazon women who came to the Amazon jungle in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Unlike other Jewish communities in Latin America, there is now an exit of Jewish youth from Costa Rica. Jews in Panama are part of the aristocracy, and there are seven kosher restaurants and eight places where kosher food can be purchased.

Mexican Jewry is organized by geography, and history and group, and you belong to a specific Jewish community which takes care of your Jewish needs.

Hopefully this has whetted your appetite to read this really enjoyable book. Even if you are only an armchair traveler, you won't be disappointed.

Sybil Kaplan is a book reviewer, journalist, lecturer, synagogue public relations specialist, and synagogue librarian from Overland Park, Ks.

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